



Jalama Camptable Times

27 February 2011

Ain't beatin term limits great? Tide tried but I got it



a'Lure

1996: Peak



All the conjecture about Peak Beach Stuff and the slope of its descent...for years it's seemed like a step off a cliff to me. Come to a nearly deserted Park at the end of February. Best site in the camp, a narrow finger of sand between two tall hedgerows, looking out on the Channel, is there for the uncontested taking. Return to the gatehouse to claim it. The keeper is a hale 50ish Santa Barbara County Parks employee without much idea how to spell my name. I do it for him and he says -\$30.00
-I thought the low season price was \$20.
-You chose a Premium Camp Site. Those are 30 year around.
-Premium, I mutter as I hand over two 20's.
He says with what I take for glee
-And they're going up.

Beach Stuff



I say

-You know what Woody Guthrie says about California...

-I don't even know who Woody Guthrie is.

He seems quite proud of this.

-He's a folk-singer, you know

This land is your land, this land is...

cold, but bright and clear, one hour away from low tide.

Perfect time for a walk but I have a camp to make. A fellow parks in the day use area: wearing boots, long pants, jacket and backpack with rain-cover and then he's off, south to the Point and has those five miles to himself.

Amble to the home of the World Famous Jalama Burger.

I was here last September, midweek, a middling site in a full camp and my J-Burger was undistinguished- what happens at the end of a season they've made hundreds a day.

After 7 years away, I'm surprised to see Don, founder of the J-Burger, behind the counter. I've not seen him here since 1999. More to hear him say

-It's the Beachwalker.

I have no idea how he could remember me -
30 days here over the last 30 years?

And say

-hey Don, how are you.

His response hasn't changed:

-What a you know?

-J-burger

-J-burger!

For breakfast.

of Champions. \$6.00

Number 00, they won't relinquish it without the receipt.

Wander over to a plastic camp table in the enclosed dining area. And sort of museum, of maps, caught fish pics, taxidermy, beach stuff and framed Santa Barbara News Press papers of September 8, 1923, reporting the loss of 7 Navy Destroyers run aground at Point Honda some miles north. First burger off the line on a day they may make 20 is like old times.

I take it outside to a table over the creek that made this the site of a village until Mission Purisima, est. 1787, "reduced" it.

For me, I guess - the lettuce is a finely shredded inch thick, the sauce is special and I like to think the beef comes from the Cojo ranch that ranges just behind the headlands. Where I ran my last 100-yard dash in 1998, crossing a field near the lighthouse to encounter a ton of bull in the brush, it's nostrils flaring and tail swishing at the sight of me.

That evening I went to the grill and ended 5 vegetarian years with a J-burger and savored each bite in spite the bull.



My campsite looks at the spot I threw the dull gray Titanium Screw into the drink on October 14, 2003.

Nigel and I talked about this, and I have come to her thinking, that hurling it was wrong. So I want it back, for the churning sea to loyally cough it up and lay it at my feet, and then to sight a heart shaped iridescent abalone shard to replace the two I've held and given away, is that asking so much?

Because every walk since tossing the Screw has been bereft. But the water is different now I've seen the sisters tossing handfuls of ash in it, like, it struck me, pagan beings.

The plastic bag with my share dropped on the shore.

I questioned holding those particles, and my fingers refused. Strode into the waves and emptied it, triple rinsed it till clean and ever since, this portion of Pacific has never been so cold, but the reality of where I hope to settle.

Returning to shore, where scatters of ash were spilled on the sand from the sisters' grabs and throws - that is where I saw the Screw.

What?

One last grin.

Then considered the pain it caused him.

Of the young man.

And Flung...

South with jacket, bag, hat, glasses, phone to take pictures, two bananas, a pint of water... 100 steps to encounter the Gasp! of Suddenly Encountered Death - of a sea lion, just the blubbery skin that covered the head and shoulders but none of that to shape it.

Troves of rocks and shells, bands wide and long as a basketball court before the receding tide, and an old easy happy grin that breaks and trembles to look, scan, sift.

Drift, and reverie, 40 years of continuity and bygone selves
to wonder on. First selection takes a mile or so, it ain't much
but its something to hold. At the crumbling seawall, a small
abalone shell. Then -



Chiton shell!



Think that's a coincidence?



Lots! Of iridescence to reach for.

Time flies to mid afternoon, two miles short of the Point.
Thinking, the south wind is just fine going south. It will be a
hard cold trudge back to camp; so turn around.



Eggcrate!

Plenty of Vision of the Virgin Mary Shell Shards -
bone white, long, flowing, curvy - hey!

PREDICTION OF THE INVENTION OF HDTV
(Plasma - Wall mount)

Holding this in my hand as I encounter the second to last bend
on the way back, a shaggy unlaced boots heavy jacketed long
stick walking bearded man still headed south.

-Hey there.

-Hi, how far you going?

-This is it, I think that tides about come back around.

-Yeah.

I uncoil the kelp-bulb from around my neck.

-That's something.

I envision keeping it on the vast expanse of dashboard in the
Previa to let it dry.

-Ain't it?

A quarter mile north, I'm tired, hungry, and would like a cigaret;
spy a shelter from sun and wind carved at the base of the bluff
and head over for a sit.

The stick walking guy is coming my way.

I shift to make room if he'd like to set.

-That's a nice windbreak. You smoke weed?

Go figure.

Thinking about my application for maintenance man at an
apartment complex in Lompoc and the clean as a pin urine
sample I had for it.

-I do. I'm Chris. And extend my hand

Mike says he is a miner, with homegrown medical marijuana
from Colorado.

It makes me cough, grin, and we talk for a while.

He's been here 4 days, is taken with the beach and thinks its
one of those places people just don't know about.

I tell him no, spring, summer, fall, it's crawling with people.

Maybe not this far down the beach, but the park.

That the petroleum blobs he's dodged are not from the drilling
platforms in the Channel, but naturally occurring tar seeps...

And by ancient rites Point Concepcion was the airstrip for the
departure of souls.

-How about that.

We start walking back, along the tide, chatting a little but
mostly looking.

Then Mike says:

-Smoker!

And bends down for a shard of abalone, removes a ziplok
baggie from coat to keep it along with a handful of others.

-What you call it?

-Smoker!

-Why's that?

-Cause they're Smokin hot!

-Looks like I'm going to have to walk in front of you.

Mike laughs, and soon enough is giving me tips on how to look for Sea-Glass. I know some people who'd love to witness this...but to my consternation and surprise, I have to restrain my step from quickening.

My eyes flit and see nothing.

Mike, strolling, poking with his stick, finds three more Smokers!

He shows me a little dime-sized fragment

-That's worth \$15-20 to a jewelry maker.

Dubious about that, impossible to imagine raffling off my own from their bowls - or the pearl of D's smile, who keeps a collection next to the toothbrushes in her bathroom....

I eat my last banana - blood sugar dropping, two miles yet to walk. But not the epic hike I had returning from Point Arguello with James in 1979, stumbling back to camp to the back of his 64' Dodge truck where I'd stashed a bunch of cantaloupes I'd grown in Bakersfield and assaulted this fruit with my primordial hunger. Jimmy watched me for a while and said

- You got another one of those Gorilla Nuts?

Always made you laugh.

Allowed me as many as 12 moves in chess.

Leukemia cancelled his 50th birthday.

In his last days at home in a Capitola trailer park, June 2003, Jimmy installed an automatic drip irrigation system for Melinda's flower garden, then replaced the drive-line on their motor-home and knew one last bit of anger, when the junkie down the street asked Jim to replace his starter.

Anna witnessed his death rattle in the hospital, and that he closed his eyes, slipped a tear, and died.



Kitsepawit informed Harrington in 1914:

"We are constantly walking on herbs
the virtues of which no one knows"

1700 years ago

Insulated Big Man Smokes Dope Too Early did though
He found mushrooms that take you farther than boats
Too Many Things In His Hands caulked with asphaltum
To make sea worthy for the Channel Islands
And said, well bro we could take both
Big trouble and they got kicked out
Inland to what is now known
as Bakersfield

Walkin south to Point Conception
I'm the latest in latent image keeping
I always reach for iridescence
Ain't that just a pretty thing to find

There she was at 17th and Geary
Waiting for the bus not a little weary
I offered my hand and told her my name
Come to find out life would never be the same

Carry a sack so I can bring things back
Deeply sifting pebbles surely is madness
Less you're solely searching quantities of driftglass
Good for filling jars and making wind chimes too
Real nice not that special
I keep to the top of the line of the tide
That's where the rightest now resides
Ain't that just the best thing to find

Jalamalithic Coins, Buttons and Stackers
Nother Nilla Wafer, like to fill a bowl

That rock looks like a Flintstones home
That's too dumb I'm going to leave it alone
Lot of these is the size of eggs
Fit inside an organic free range hens
Recycled paper crate, wonder if I might
Fetch an even dozen, wouldn't that
Be just a funny thing to find

All of a week spelling her name
Fingertips tappin into my palm
A four letter fever, over and again
Sometimes seven, her middle name is Ann
Can we start doing things consecutive days?
We rode on my Seca, Mission to Geneva
for Mom is Cooking's Sopa de Tortilla
Ain't that just a pretty way to dine

1543 Conception blew a storm
Broke Cabrillo's arm and the Spaniard died



Five miles to reach the Point
Eyes a-peeled for the holy grail
a Latex shield in the shape of a man
Once I found a coke can come from Japan
Walked it back to camp, dropped it in the trash
That is not a pretty thing to find

"A Morbid Lust for Bones" Vacation

14 October 2004

EPILOUGE

Deb says I ought to write a novel about an obsessive blogger who can't write a novel. She says it with those editor glasses sitting halfway down her nose that make her look invincible...

PARTS OF THIS BOOK MAYBE REPRODUCED BY ANYONE, ARE ENTIRELY ERRONEOUS AND PURELY UNCOINCIDENTAL, FOR ANY REASON, WITHOUT THE OLD MISSIONS OF CALIFORNIA - AS YOU KNOW, I HATE THEM

THOUGH WE MAY NOT KNOW WHY, at the time, we do what we do, now I know why I so decisively threw the titanium screw that was the last bit I saw or held of my father, into the ocean, there at Jalama, now I do: to return a year later and find it...

I know the spot I threw it, I know how hard and far I flung it, I know how wicked these riptides are - the screw was 3/8th" long, flat slotted head machine threads, perhaps 5/16th in diameter, and is out there somewhere.

When she says
Welcome Home
is why I come back.

HARDLY EVER MORE RELIANT on the kindness of strangers,
brother can you spare a sharpie?

TOSSED

INTO THE DRINK 10-14-2003

A SLOTTED $3/8$ THS TITANIUM

SCREW, AS COMMONLY USED IN
HIP REPLACEMENT PROCEDURES

NOW I WANT IT BACK

PLEASE

IF YOU HAVE BY CHANCE COLLECTED

THIS OBJECT - REWARD

CONTACT

THE BEACHWALKER

As a Boy he came here equipped with one of those early television screen magnifying covers, a plastic convex lens filled with blue oil to interrogate the soil with, and so began his legendary collection of Chumash stuff.

He'd need about a week to find this thing, and it just happened he had one, along with the latest in metallurgical wands. He set the knob to titanium and...

Of course of course is where to start.

Numbered morning I want to flee.

Sit here meekly.

She didn't even ask if I wanted her

Virus, humans are like that.

Some people just exude likeability though.

This was not just a feeling I had but a quality I could see in his shoulders, back of his head, sitting together to hear poetry, I thought "He's my neighbor now" and wanted him to be here next Saturday.

CERTAIN PERSPECTIVES ARE MISSING

from the chronically disordered post traumatic stress

"Victim." VICTIM?

Do you hate that voice too?

Imagine yourself a long-coated, many pocketed hawker of small kindnesses.

HURT MY FEELINGS

- Returned to the countryside

- Slept in the "pop-up"

Dried Loneliness, comforting as Enoch Emory's

Mummified Monkeysized Messiah, in the Mvsevm.

Off the shelf, gimmie a haircut, I can name a timecard.

Or as Hildie said,

"One thing both you and I know how to deal with is tedium."

And fret, it's not possible to come here and not think of death.
Why not?
These tides redistribute tons of material hourly.
I want a message from Dad.
Though I know what he'd say.
- Everything Happens At The Interface.

I got back before the store closed.
I was almost sure of her name.
Certain.
mmm
Chip!
Eve?
That's right
Big Plans Tonight?
Channel Three Dodgers and Saint Louie.
A Tee Vee out here?
Wanna watch it?
Very softly, as true, false and real as I get
Yes. Telling all.

So out the living room window view of Mt. Tranquillon.
Where laps in this amphitheater of Nature's Beneficence,
Gateway to the Spirit, North America, the Pacific Ocean.
He was such a chowderhead, I always knew. Too loud,
unsupple and morbid about handling merchandise and dollars
in a rush to retire.

I watch Eve make the salad and think of what great senior
parents we'll make. I'll be 64 when Junior graduates in 2022,
provided the vas reversal surgery goes okay.
Its 75K, but you know what?

DEEP DRYING BRINE SMELL remembers me well.

5 mile Hike, I find

LARGE "FUNK" TYPE

1. Hunk of Coral
2. Half Dollar sized Urchin!
3. Plastic Hen Fragment
4. Inorganic fiberey mop of polypropylene

Left the Urchin on my camp table.

Morning come to find a gull took it for crackers, shattered.

The rubbery sheet of seaweed that looked like it would make a frying pan scrubber was, on closer inspection, covered with wriggling white larval things - I like this

Earth is Sending One of its Special Inhabitants a Message stuff.

Poppa?

Helluva cuppa coffee, Jefe

How is it I can never be acquainted with the part of me that
Just Knows?

Chaweng Beach, Koh Samui 1988, approached by a young
Thai fellow. Would I like to see shoes from Burma?

And I knew exactly what shoes from Burma looked like!

Exotic pointy embroidered jewel encrusted slippers!

Yes I wanted to see shoes from Burma, and he reached into a
sack and opened a small metal case of gems in a bed of foam.

He had not said "shoes" but "jewels."

A Tarantula, big as my palm, heading north, is too close to the
tide. I wonder if it's taken such a ride - it's aimed as if it has,
toward the continent. I bend close, covering it with my
shadow until it resides in my head, that immediately shakes
no: good comes of a tarantula wriggling inside my head.

The Crunch, a sickening sound, was the plum sized urchin shell I'd found and put in my shoe's toe for safekeeping being forgotten.

Watched in amazement, none of the stories ever being told right, even once by accident. Stay tuned however - after these words from my Corporate Sponsors -

RENT THE GOOD WHITE FABRIC OF THE NARRATIVE SPACE -



I didn't consciously set out to collect CS's serially until 2003; come spring I'll have a chair, sitting in Clive & Stephanie's living room. Can I quote Spicer?

"Click.

Snap."

Think that's a coincidence?

I got on with the Snack Bar at Paradise.

Its definitely a different deal for us, mandatory cheery demeanors aside of fries with that? You try hard not to think "Grown Man" as you work the price tagger over the contents of six cases of beverages and instead marvel at the 144 dollars profit these marks make- you mark it, you have a Market. Lunch Breaks I take

SAND DUNE

BACK REST

for 30 minutes of slack jawed dolphin watching.

First day of creation Mobius strip, they really do frolic.



Tired cause I got up early to go surfing before work and what this means to Eve is I don't care to stay up late to sate her.

Ah, adulteration.

Beachwalker's a Kept SnackBarhand,

I hear the snickers.

Dolphins got to spout off.

Pelicans dive for lunch.

I once thought - I'll always have my jump shot.

The Women at the (non-en) Counter

I don't know how it is I get mistaken for a tornado like gust of fresh air, but there it is - the Snack Bar Lady is, as always, especially glad to see me.

The ring is gone and she knew I'd return, my solitary ever in tow.

Stranger things are about to happen - the hyperactive super merchandising Snack Bar Man has been sent packing, and I sense the difference. The shelves look relaxed, and a look at the menu says it's her work now.

My experience with merchandise refrigerators comes in handy.

See, I explain, kneeling down at the bottom grill, there's a fan back there that draws air, and dust, through the narrow fins of the Condenser, and you just have to...

She puts hand to my shoulder to "steady" her squat beside me.

As if she didn't know.

Already lying to each other is the name of my grin.

As to what this job pays.

Surf in the morning, where I want to expire.

Beachwalker, this is your once in a lifetime opportunity to...

No, it didn't go like that but this:

Jalama Picayune Examiner

Not a day goes by that isn't here

V. 2347, No.1 - January 1, 2000

AZIFAZTHO IN FROM MARKS GENUINE ENCOUNTER

JALAMA, CA -- One of the Central Coast's most beloved characters has become an overnight network success with a novel Email spam technique. Chris (Chip (Chaco (Dogboy))) Sullivan, longtime visitor and portal-channeler, has struck a nerve in the burgeoning online civilization with a novel method for channeling the North American Portal experience through electronic messages.

"I got this email and it said it was from AziFaztho", recounts Jayne McGillicutty of Portland, ME, "who I'm sure I've never met. When I opened it, it was like ... Oh, Wow, I just can't find the words to describe it." Numerous reports of email-induced extraperceptory experiences have been fielded by America Online, one of the nation's largest internet service providers.

"I've checked this out", said Percy H. Adaheart, one of AOL's top spam detectives. "This isn't spam, it's more like ... Oh, Wow, I just can't find the words to describe it." Several individuals who declined requests for interviews did mention that the AziFaztho emails contained short, meditative messages and simple images that conspired to create a feeling of wellbeing and calm enlightenment.

It seems few in the Jalama community are surprised at their favorite son/visitor's latest genre. "The first time I saw that boy, I knew he was one of us", said Bloated SealCorpse, a respected Jalama dweller. "He took a picture of me and captured my inner self", reported Rusted TruckChassis, one of the caretakers of the meadow near the cliff. One group of small stones excitedly recounted their recent trip to San Francisco, courtesy of our own Dogboy.

Chip declined an interview and said only "It's just something I do", when contacted by phone. Jalama is familiar with 'just what he does' and is proud to be associated with Mr. Sullivan, the latest in an auspicious line of Portal Channelers. According to Bigrock Overthere, "He was a winner 1700 years ago and he's a winner now. He just knows how to pluck it from the ether".



I go to dial the phone but it just rings
me and you, we got a yin yang thing
like flowers in a bowl, or hair through a comb
sometimes the shudder that follows a moan
and the days I just brood all you do is sing
yeah what we got, is a yin yang thing
there was a hole in my pocket
that dropped a rock in your shoe
and the first step of our journey
has multiplied by a million or two
for all the days weeks and years and entire lives
spent alone I was that hound down by the river
gnawing eons off the bone there would come a day
you'd come swimming home
like a boat needs the ocean
there's got to be some sand
I was the sweat in the palm of your hand
rubbed dry now there's no need to wonder
what the future will bring
you and me, we got a yin yang thing

I come back and she says

- Hi!

Big as a sunflower.

And then

- Welcome Home

For once my eyes do not avert - SoCal blond, more health than god, three generations of tract homes behind her folks were of the few white people not ok with Tulsa after the 1921 Race Massacre, and fled west.

- I wish it was.

- I think it should. You and San Francisco don't add up to me.

- Something happens to my anatomy...

And here I'm astonished, appalled and really, not surprised at all at my choice of phrase -

Eve's lips pursed, ever so slightly...

...soon as I step foot here.

- You feel right.

- Yeah.

- Which you feel all the time when you are here.

- I do.

And I was just stumbling in for Breakfast!

This house, and this Snack Bar -

well, its a Store, I guess -

could all be mine!

TO BE TAKING YOUR ORDER PLEASE?

(last two numbers of my receipt? Year of my birth - think that's a coincidence?)

14 October 2003

Campsite #49, Gateway to the Spirit, North America

A momentous occasion - existence of Time disproved -

DETAILS AT 11

It wasn't the damndest thing, but there it was, a titanium screw, in there among all the gray particles - I picked it up and showed it to the Brother and lost my sense to say - What the hell is that?

For a moment, maybe a minute, I kept it; then knew better and threw it. Into the wild foaming drink.

A few minutes later it occurred to me:

it had come from his hip.

The day before, walking along the tideline, I saw a small garter snake and thought, "You're in the wrong place, my friend, you'd better leave." I bent down to rescue it. It went serpentine on me, which I just admired - then, a rush of water and the snake was gone, back to its long afternoon.

Breakfast Prior

How do we do it? With meat, potatoes and vegetables, each a fist sized portion, and I've got a big hand. Hunks of butter, salt and pepper. Smiled to be among them, thought how unself-consciously I could pour from the shaker - not many fit into this brood. Kevin obtained the food, and as he prepared it conjectured about a Neutrino Lensing system for the Human Archeome Project - a kind of x-ray of the globe to spare the entirety of its surface the interrogating dig (to catalog "the complete human artifact on earth") he says is necessary to truly know our story; explained why we see the moon about fifty minutes later each night; edified me on the word "ontology" -

said to my complaint that "pre-aesthetic ontology" was an impossibly general phrase to derive much meaning from -

- Hi I'm Kev, from Geodetic Ontological Design Systems.

I was lost and said

- Huh, that's a company you heard of?

- GODS, Inc., planetary developments.

-Oh...

Now mentioned his acquaintance with Ontogeny and the recapitulation of Phylogeny...

None of this said loud, emphatic as a raised eyebrow.

So Dad, not being around, I put it to him instead:

- Kev, what is sand the result of?

He paused.

- The erosive effect of waves against rock, I believe.

This filled me with wonder.

- So once, that's all there was, water and rock.

- That is the story. A volcano erupted and covered the earth with molten black. Then a rain fell that cooled it.

- What makes a wave?

- The wind.

- What makes the wind?

- Convection in the atmosphere caused by the Sun's heat.

- Okay.

- You want to stop there? We could go to the sun.

- Yeah. This sand is really old isn't it?

- I don't know. The earth is what, 4 billion years old.

This stuff may be recent.

- But it was all rock once.

- Yes.

- Think there's some Ontogeny Recapitulating Phylogeny to all that, big bang to grains of sand?

- That would be Fractal Verisimilitude.



These drilling platforms in the Santa Barbara Channel came to resemble a portrait of my father in triplicate, seen at night, smoking a cigarette in horizontal repose,

Frank was 40, Frances was 12, Kevin was 10, I was 8. Late at night winds came howling so fiercely we woke wondering if the tent would remain standing. But Dad wasn't worried. The previous year it had withstood 60 mph gales all through the night.

He lit a cigarette and got the lantern going.

A moth flitted, hovered, then dove toward the mantle and he said "This is what's meant by a snowballs chance in hell."

And the moth flew out.

GUADALUPE

NORTH TO SOUTH

SAN LUIS OBISPO	35	SANTA BARBARA	79
PASO ROBLES	65	VENTURA	74
SALINAS	185	SANTA MONICA	1120
SAN JOSE	213	LOS ANGELES	1187
SAN FRANCISCO	264	SAN DIEGO	301
SACRAMENTO	403	BERKELEY	1240
YOSEMITE	341	EL CENTRO	356
LAKE TAHOE	489	CAS VEGAS	1445
RENO	489	PHOENIX	576
SALT LAKE CITY	615	EL PASO	987
PORTLAND	1009	OKLAHOMA CITY	1760
SEATTLE	163	LITTLE ROCK	1505
LOGAN, W.VA.	2095	VANDENBERG	21

GUADALUPE

BAKERSFIELD

SANTA MARIA

SANTA BARBARA

VENTURA

BAKERSFIELD

SANTA MARIA

SANTA BARBARA

VENTURA

LOS ANGELES

LONG BEACH

OCEANSIDE

SAN DIEGO

TIJUANA